

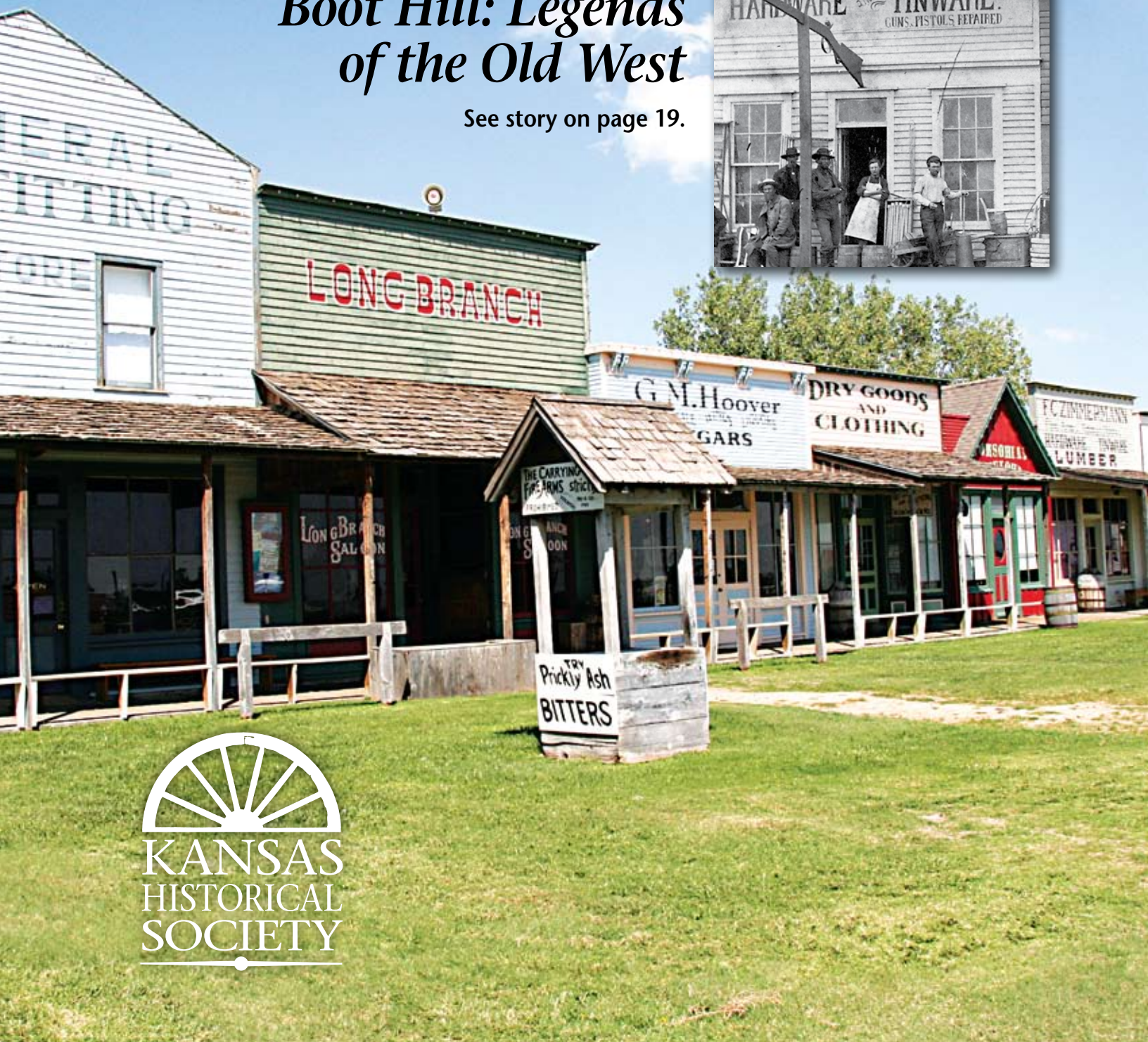
Kansas Preservation

Autumn 2009 • Volume 31, Number 4

REAL PLACES. REAL STORIES.

Boot Hill: Legends of the Old West

See story on page 19.





Newsletter of the Cultural
Resources Division
Kansas Historical Society

Autumn 2009

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Governor Mark Parkinson
Jennie Chinn, State Historic Preservation Officer
Patrick Zollner, Deputy SHPO, Editor
Linda Kunkle Park, Graphic Designer

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Heritage Trust Fund Grants Awarded

The Kansas Historic Sites Board of Review recommended \$1,175,752 in Heritage Trust Fund grants for 20 projects across the state in May 2009.

Atchison County Courthouse, \$32,134

Vinland Fairgrounds Exhibit Building, Douglas County, \$10,992

Elk County Courthouse, \$90,000

Burr House, Ford County, \$11,040

Greenwood Hotel, Greenwood County, \$90,000

Anthony Theater, Harper County, \$90,000

Warkentin House, Harvey County, \$53,094

Buck Creek School, Jefferson County, \$24,380

Edward Carroll House, Leavenworth County, \$31,200

Linn County Courthouse, \$90,000

William F. and Ida G. Schaeffler House, Marion County, \$84,261

Darrah Barn, McPherson County, \$90,000

Jackson Hotel, Miami County, \$56,478

Alfred M. Landon Home, Montgomery County, \$71,280

Agra Lake and Park, Phillips County, \$90,000

Shirley Opera House, Rawlins County, \$14,083

Hamlin Block, Reno County, \$16,927

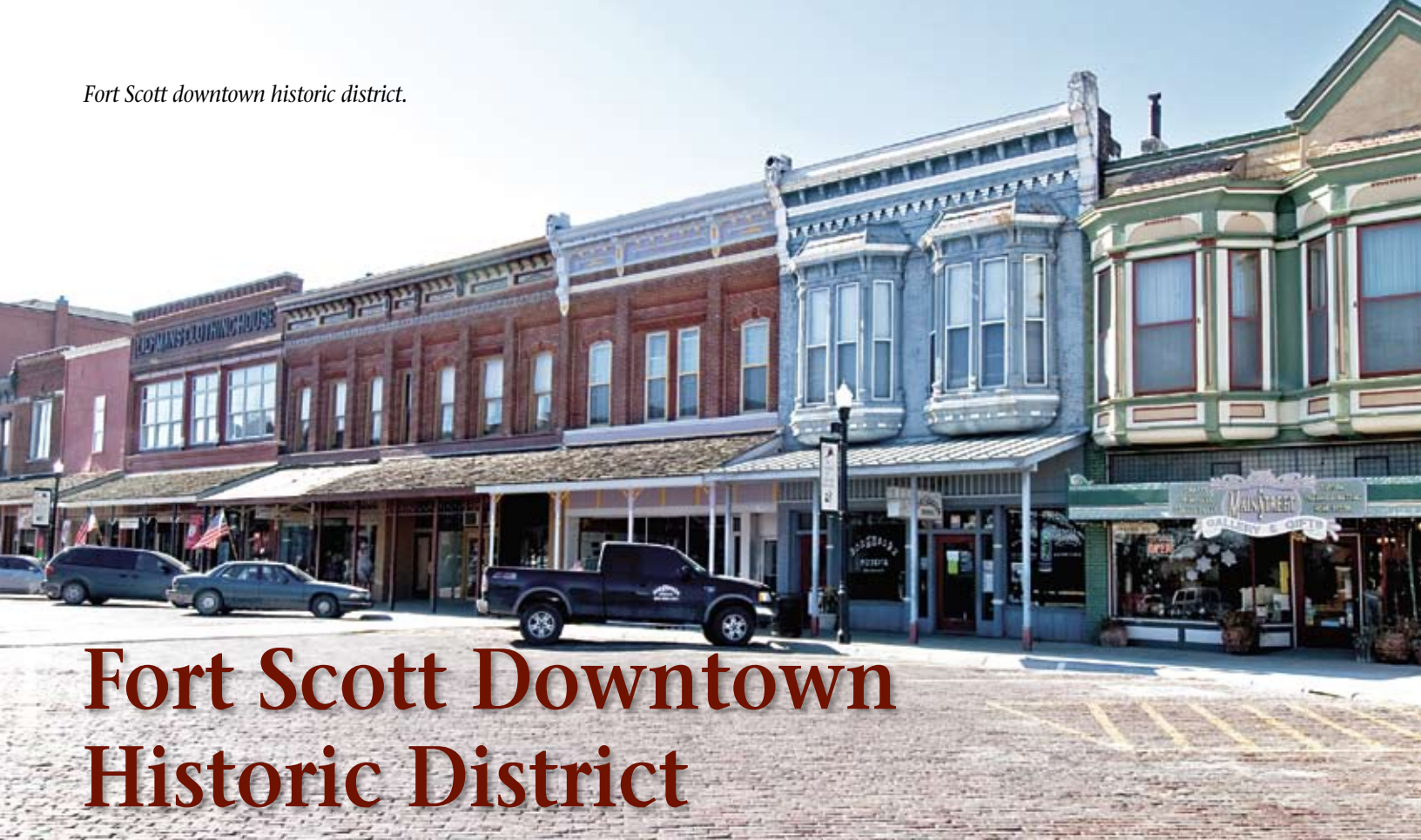
Fairmount Congregational Church, Sedgwick County, \$66,395

Saint Michael Convent and School, Trego County, \$73,488

Brandt Hotel, Wabaunsee County, \$90,000



Burr House, Ford County.



Fort Scott Downtown Historic District

by Dale E. Nimz
Preservation consultant

One of Kansas Territory's largest towns began as a frontier fort near the Missouri border. By the time the territory was opened for settlement, the military post had closed, but the historic fort continued to influence the development of the burgeoning community.

The Fort Scott downtown historic district includes more than 80 buildings within nine-and-a-half blocks that developed from 1863 until 1970. The district was nominated to the National Register of Historic Places for its local commercial history, its association with the development of Fort Scott, and for its representation of popular architectural styles.

Fort Scott was established along the Marmaton River in 1842 as a military post on the western frontier. It was located at a midpoint on the Military Road between Fort Leavenworth to the north on the Missouri River and Fort Coffey in the Cherokee Nation lands to the south. When the army abandoned Fort Scott in 1853, the fort buildings were sold to civilian residents. These buildings became the nucleus of the town that developed after Kansas Territory was opened to settlement in 1854. When the Civil War began in 1861, the old fort once again served as a federal outpost and supply depot. Relative security and the demand for supplies from the local garrison stimulated the local

economy and encouraged the construction of commercial buildings. When the war ended on April 9, 1865, Fort Scott was a busy military post, but the troops gradually left the town during the next year.

At the end of the Civil War, Fort Scott had a population of about 1,800 residents and began to grow rapidly. The long-term prosperity of the town was founded on the arrival of railroads. The Missouri River, Fort Scott, and Gulf Railroad reached Fort Scott on December 7, 1869, and one year later the Missouri, Kansas, and Texas Railroad connected Fort Scott with St. Louis and built southwest toward Texas. Eventually, the various lines were consolidated into three main systems serving Fort Scott: the Missouri Pacific; Missouri, Kansas, and Texas; and the St. Louis and San Francisco.

The town's fastest period of growth occurred from 1865 to 1888, and by June 1887, Fort Scott had become the fourth largest town in Kansas with a population of approximately 14,000 people. In the 1860s and 1870s, contiguous commercial buildings—first wood-frame then brick and



Scottish Rite temple and Western Insurance building, view from the northwest.

stone—were constructed on the north side of Market Street (present-day Old Fort Boulevard). Commercial development extended west on Oak Street, to the east on Wall Street, and south on Scott Avenue, Main Street, and National Avenue.

The first permanent stone and brick buildings were erected immediately after the Civil War in the late 1860s. The oldest remaining building in the downtown district is the Wilder House Hotel, which was built in 1863 of locally manufactured brick. An early and longtime developer, C. W. Goodlander, built the Miller Block (destroyed by fire in 2005) and McDonald Hall of local stone in 1865. Goodlander built or supervised the construction of most of the buildings erected in the early days of Fort Scott and continued as a building contractor until about 1900.

Downtown Fort Scott was changed by a destructive fire on April 21, 1873, that began on Bigler Street (later Old Fort Boulevard). Since most of the existing commercial buildings were wood-frame structures, the fire spread quickly and burned all the buildings on the two blocks from Stanton to Hendricks Street. Despite the losses, merchants rebuilt more fireproof brick, iron, and stone buildings. By the early 1880s, construction of a municipal water works was underway.

The architectural styles represented in these early permanent buildings largely include Italianate, Queen Anne, and Romanesque. Most of late 19th century commercial buildings exhibit Italianate characteristics, which include

bracketed cornices and tall, narrow, upper-story windows often with decorative hoods and bracketed cornices. Several examples of Italianate-style commercial buildings are located along Main and Wall streets and include the old Empress Theater at 7 N Main, the Star Clothing House at 13, 15, and 19 N Main, and the old Masonic Hall at 118 E Wall Street.

In 1904 automobiles appeared on the streets of Fort Scott and the effects of this new form of transportation eventually changed the face of the downtown. In 1907 Fort Scott had a strong commercial and industrial economy for a town of its size with two daily newspapers, three banks and a building and loan association, four produce companies, a candy factory, two marble works, an overall factory, a mattress factory, two bottling works, three iron foundries, an automobile factory, two steam laundries, two automobile garages, a wholesale saddlery, a packing house, two hydraulic cement plants, the largest sorghum syrup works in Bourbon County, two ice plants, a pottery works, and a large flouring mill. Other major businesses were the Central Life Insurance Company, the Fort Scott Wholesale Grocery, the brick and tile plant, and the machine shops of the Missouri Pacific and St. Louis-San Francisco railroads.

In the early 20th century successes seemed to outweigh the problems and this confidence was expressed in downtown construction. This was also the period during which several of Fort Scott’s civic buildings were erected, including the Fort Scott Public Library (1904), the Memorial Hall (1925), the Bourbon County Courthouse (1930), and the Federal Courthouse (1935). Architectural styles represented in these and the district’s other early 20th century resources largely include Commercial, Classical Revival, Renaissance Revival, and Spanish Revival. Of particular note from this period are the monumental Spanish Revival-style Masonic Temple and the Scottish Rite Cathedral in the 100 block of South Main Street. Both buildings were completed in the 1920s, and the temple was considered one of the most magnificent Masonic buildings in the state.

As the automobile became an important mode of transportation, Fort Scott boosters tried to capitalize on their highway connections. In 1922 boosters promoted Fort

Extant buildings in Fort Scott historic district by decade:				
1860s	1880s	1890s	1900s	1910s
7 buildings	25 buildings	6 buildings	7 buildings	5 buildings

Scott's location on the Great Atlantic and Pacific paved highway (later U.S. 54), and by 1930 Fort Scott was being advertised as a highway center with four national highways running in four different directions. Kansas Highway 73-E was considered "the main artery of auto traffic from Kansas City to the entire southwest."

Like other communities, Fort Scott was hurt by the depression of the 1930s. Companies cut wages, prices dropped, and farmers faced drought. Many businesses failed and hundreds of Fort Scott workers lost their jobs, especially the railroad workers so important to the local economy. Except for the construction of government buildings including the Fort Scott Post Office and Federal Building, there was very little development in the downtown during the 1930s and early 1940s.

Beginning in the 1950s, local residents began to lobby for the preservation and interpretation of the former Fort Scott military post as a historic site. Early in 1969 the local newspaper reported proudly that the city, the National Park Service, and the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) jointly were planning a major redevelopment of the central business district that would "preserve and enhance the landmarks" of Fort Scott's history as a frontier military outpost. HUD awarded a grant of more than one million dollars to help plan and redevelop Fort Scott's downtown.

Since the approaches to the historic fort area were blocked from view by 19th century buildings, the plan called for demolition of those structures to reveal the parade ground and reconstructed buildings. With the designation of Fort Scott as a National Historic Site administered by the National Park Service, the old fort just north of the present downtown district became a significant visitor attraction by 1978.

Urban redevelopment in the 1970s resulted in the demolition of more than 80 historic buildings in the downtown. Before urban renewal, Fort Scott boasted a commercial district of more than 13 blocks. Today the Fort Scott Downtown Historic District is a roughly rectangular area of approximately nine-and-a-half blocks with irregular boundaries south and southwest of the former military post.



Memorial Hall, view from southwest.

Forty-two of the district's 87 resources were constructed before 1900, with the majority of these erected in the 1880s during a period of dramatic population growth.

Another important change that affected downtown Fort Scott was the sale and closure of Western Insurance Company in 1987. Without that major downtown employer, other businesses on Main Street closed and new commercial development moved from the downtown area south to the outskirts of town on U.S. 69. The population of Fort Scott declined in the 20th century from 10, 463 in 1910 to 8,297 in 2000. More recently, a fire on March 11, 2005, damaged or destroyed nine historic buildings in the downtown. Among the destroyed buildings were the 1888 Drake Building at 9-11 S Main, Cotter's Tavern at 110-112 E Wall Street, the 1863 Miller Block at 1-5 S Main, and the 1884 Nelson Building at 106-108 Wall Street. An attempt was made to save the severely damaged Miller Block and Nelson Building, and the two properties were listed in the Register of Historic Kansas Places in order to be eligible for preservation grants and tax incentives. Unfortunately, the buildings were subsequently determined to be structurally unstable and were razed.

Despite the cumulative effects of urban renewal and destructive fires, more than 80 commercial and institutional buildings remain in the historic downtown commercial district providing an every day reminder of nearly 150 years of Fort Scott history.

1920s	1930s	1940s	1950s	Post-1960
13 buildings	3 buildings	3 buildings	1 building	9 buildings

National Register Nominations

The Historic Sites Board of Review voted to list one property in the Register of Historic Kansas Places and to forward nine nominations to the National Register of Historic Places at its regular meeting in August. The board also approved the removal of one property from the National Register and two properties from the state register.

by Sarah Martin

National Register Coordinator, Kansas Historical Society

Fort Scott Downtown Historic District – Fort Scott, Bourbon County

Fort Scott was established in 1842 as a military post on the western frontier to prevent European American settlers from moving into the country west of the Missouri border that was reserved for American Indians. The U.S. Army abandoned Fort Scott in 1853 because the area was to be opened for settlement. A community established around the abandoned post and eventually became the Bourbon County seat of government. Construction of permanent stone and brick buildings in the downtown began in the early 1860s and picked up after the close of the Civil War in 1865. The downtown historic district includes nine-and-a-half blocks of the central commercial district that developed from 1863 until 1970 when urban renewal efforts demolished a number of commercial buildings to the north and east. The historic district boundaries are based on a previous survey and recommendations by the staff of the Kansas Historic Preservation Office. The district was nominated for its local commercial history, its association with the planning and development of Fort Scott, and for its representation of popular architectural styles.



Helmerts Manufacturing Company Building – 300 Santa Fe Street / 2500 S 2nd Street, Leavenworth, Leavenworth County

The Helmerts Manufacturing Company Building was built in 1909 to accommodate an expanding furniture manufacturing business. What began as a small manufacturer of barber chairs that operated out of two downtown storefronts in the late 1880s, expanded into a regional furniture company with larger facilities in Leavenworth and Kansas City. Like many industrial buildings of this vintage, the Helmerts building has a plain, utilitarian design with load-bearing brick walls and heavy timber framing. Features that reflect evolving industrial building technology include steel lintels that provide the structural capacity for grouped windows and modern mechanical systems—most notably light, heat, and fire safety, which improved working conditions and building safety. The company operated out of this building until 1940. The property was nominated as a good example of an early 20th century manufacturing facility constructed at the juncture of traditional and modern building technologies.



Left to right, Fort Scott Downtown Historic District, Bourbon County; Helmerts Manufacturing Company Building, Leavenworth County.



Left to right, Garfield Elementary School, Dickinson County; Old Gray Courthouse, Gray County; and Penley House, Sedgwick County.

Garfield Elementary School – 300 NW 7th, Abilene, Dickinson County

Designed by Kansas City-based architect Joseph W. Radotinsky, Abilene's Garfield Elementary School was built in 1942 with the assistance of the federal Work Projects Administration. Radotinsky's designs of the 1930s and 1940s were notable, breaking from the Progressive Era tenets that had defined educational architecture for the first three decades of the 20th century. A review of school board minutes and local media coverage of the school's planning and construction clearly portrays an emphasis on modern accoutrements, an attention to functional aspects of the school's use, consideration of maintenance and performance of materials, and planning for future expansion. With its blond brick and concrete construction, horizontal lines and bands of windows, stepped bays, and simple form, it is an excellent example of Modern and Art Moderne architecture. It was part of the *Historic Public Schools of Kansas* and the *New Deal-Era Resources of Kansas* multiple property nominations for its association with local educational history and its architecture.

Old Gray County Courthouse – 117 S Main Street, Cimarron, Gray County

This two-story brick commercial building in downtown Cimarron was at the center of a heated county seat dispute in 1889. When Gray County was established in 1887, Cimarron was designated the temporary county seat. Nearby Ingalls also sought permanent county seat status and in an election on October 31, 1887, both towns claimed victory. Accusations of buying votes and ballot-box stuffing were slung back and forth. The Kansas Supreme Court eventually declared Cimarron the winner. The building that would serve as Gray County's first courthouse was one of only a few permanent masonry buildings in Cimarron at the time. The county leased the building in January 1888. One year later a

group of men from Ingalls raided the courthouse and stole the county records leaving three men dead in the bloody gunfight. Despite this setback, the county continued to operate in Cimarron. The present courthouse, which dates to 1927, is located two blocks south of this building. The Old Gray County Courthouse was nominated for its association with the history of early Cimarron history and its role in the 1889 Gray County seat war.

Penley House – 3400 Penley Drive, Wichita, Sedgwick County

The Penley House was built in 1917 on a 20-acre tract at the east edge of Wichita. Its long driveway was lined with trees and stretched west toward Hillside Street. The Classical Revival-style house is dominated by a two-story Greek temple portico supported by four colossal Ionic columns that

The National Register of Historic Places is the country's official list of historically significant properties. Properties must be significant for one or more of the four criteria for evaluation. Under Criterion A, properties can be eligible if they are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. Under Criterion B, properties can be eligible if they are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past. Under Criterion C, properties can be eligible if they embody the distinctive characteristic of a type, period, or method of construction, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction. Under Criterion D, properties may be eligible for the National Register if they have yielded or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history. The National Register recognizes properties of local, statewide, and national significance.



Left to right, Wichita High School, Sedgwick County; Wathena Fruit Grower's Association Building, Doniphan County; and Cuba Blacksmith Shop, Republic County.

extend over the galleried porch on the front elevation. The property was subdivided in 1941 for residential development in response to the city's World War II-era housing shortage. Today the house sits on just one-half acre and small mid-century Minimal Traditional-style residences now flank what was the long driveway. It was part of the *Residential Resources of Wichita – 1870-1957* multiple property nomination for its Classical Revival architecture.

Wichita High School – 324 N Emporia, Wichita, Sedgwick County

Wichita High School was designed by architect William B. Ittner and erected in 1910-1911 in the Collegiate Gothic style. Based in St. Louis, Ittner designed public school buildings throughout the Midwest, including Liberty Memorial High School and Woodlawn Elementary School in Lawrence. The Wichita High School building is three stories and features a brick exterior with stone quoins at the building's corners. Two slightly projecting crenellated towers flank the central entrance. Above the entrance on the corbels beneath the second-story windows are sculpted figures representing educational themes. The building no longer functions as a school, and current plans call for it to be rehabilitated into apartments. It was part of the *Historic Public Schools of Kansas* multiple property nomination for its architectural significance.

Wathena Fruit Growers' Association Building – 104 3rd Street, Wathena, Doniphan County

The Wathena Fruit Growers' Association Building was erected in 1909 in downtown Wathena. The building is located near the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific and the St. Joseph and Grand Island railroad lines that allowed farmers to ship their produce to markets west, northwest, and southwest of Wathena. The two-story Commercial-style building served as

a central meeting place for the fruit growers who worked for a consistent and fair market in which to sell their produce. The association owned the building until 1945 when it was sold to the Farmers' State Bank. The building was nominated for its association with local commerce, the fruit industry in Doniphan County, and as a good local example of early 20th century Commercial-style architecture.

Cuba Blacksmith Shop – one-half block west of Baird Street on Lynn Street, Cuba, Republic County

Built in 1884, the Cuba Blacksmith Shop is a small, one-story limestone building that sits a half block west of the downtown. Blacksmith shops like the one in Cuba provided important services to developing farming communities that included constructing, repairing, and maintaining general farm machinery, as well as making special tools and machines for farmers and residents. Blacksmiths also provided such valuable services as shoeing horses and repairing household utensils; sharpening knives; and fixing pots, pans, and sewing machines. This building functioned as a blacksmith shop into the 1970s and then fell into disrepair in the late 20th century. In recent years the roof and rear wall had collapsed and the stone walls were beginning to fail. A group of community volunteers came together in 2006 to save the building. In December 2008 the building reopened as a functioning blacksmith shop. Today the building is owned by the city of Cuba, which plans to open about four times a year for demonstrations.

G. W. Norris House – 301 E 12th Avenue, Hutchinson, Reno County

The Norris House was built in 1912 and is a well-preserved example of the classic foursquare house with Craftsman characteristics. The foursquare, which was popularized through mail order catalogs during the early 20th century,



G. W. Norris House, Reno County.

features two stories set on a raised basement with the main entrance approached by raised steps and topped by a low pitch pyramidal or gable roof. The Norris House is located just south of the Kansas state fairgrounds, and was one of the first single-family homes built in this neighborhood, which largely developed between 1906 and 1928. The property is named for its longtime owner G. W. Norris, whose son Fred has been locally memorialized for his military service and death during World War I. The Norris House was nominated as a good local example of a foursquare house with Craftsman details.

The following property was approved for listing in the Register of Historic Kansas Places.

St. Joseph's Catholic Church & Cemetery – 13497 Lower McDowell Creek Road, Geary County

St. Joseph's Catholic Church & Cemetery are located in the McDowell Creek Valley in Geary County. The picturesque valley, which was first settled by European-Americans in the mid-1850s, includes several mid- and late-19th century farmsteads. Area Catholic parishes, including the former St. Joseph parish, trace their roots to Father Louis Dumortier, who served what is now northeast Kansas from 1859 to 1867. A church was built and a cemetery established on



Left to right, St. Joseph's Catholic Church & Cemetery, Geary County; Shedd & Marshall Store, Jackson County; and Nelson Building, Bourbon County.

this property in 1870. The existing limestone Gothic Revival-style church was built in 1910 to replace the earlier building. The church closed in 1989 and was sold to the Geary County Historical Society in 2008. The property was nominated for its Gothic Revival architecture.

The following property was approved for removal from the National Register of Historic Places.

Shedd & Marshall Store – 243 Whiting, Whiting, Jackson County

The Shedd and Marshall Store was listed in the National Register in 1977 for its architectural significance and for its association with locally significant businessmen Charles Shedd and William Marshall. Despite efforts to seek alternatives to demolition, the building was deconstructed in late 2008 and early 2009. An architectural salvage firm retained most of the building material.

The following properties were removed from the Register of Historic Kansas Places.

Nelson Building – 106-108 E Wall Street, Fort Scott, Bourbon County

Miller Block – 1-5 S Main Street, Fort Scott, Bourbon County

The Nelson Building and Miller Block were listed in the Register of Historic Kansas Places on May 21, 2005, for their association with local commercial history. The buildings sustained heavy fire damage in March 2005 and were quickly listed in the state register in an attempt to secure historic rehabilitation funding. The buildings, however, could not be saved and were torn down.

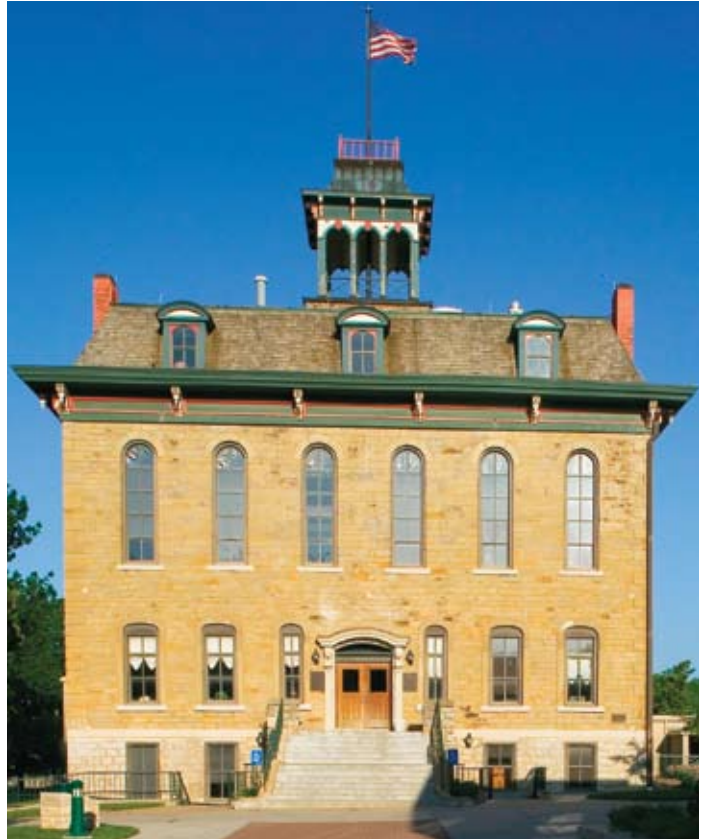
Second Empire Style

Rare in Kansas

Growing up in St. Louis some of my earliest memories of old buildings were those that stood tall next to Interstate 44 near downtown: brick Victorian row houses with mansard roofs, heavy, elaborate cornices, and grand arched entries. I was sure such foreboding structures were haunted and they instilled fear in my mind, even when we were speeding by at 60 mph. I found out later, in my first of many architectural history classes, that several of those buildings were in the style of the Second Empire. Today, Second Empire is one of my favorites, and instead of driving by I am more likely to stop traffic to get a good look.

by Kim Norton Gant

Review and Compliance Coordinator, Kansas Historical Society



Parmenter Hall (1865-1881) on the Baker University Campus in Baldwin City was built in stages as funds became available; which may account for its uncharacteristically tall second story.



An example of Second Empire style applied to a commercial building, the Cimarron Hotel, Gray County, was constructed in 1886.

Second Empire style originated in France during the reign of Louis Napoleon (1852-1870); a period in French history called the Second Empire (Napoleon Bonaparte's being the first empire). Architecturally, Second Empire style was a revival based on the work of 17th century French architect François Mansart. Mansart designed grand buildings in the French Baroque style and frequently used steep, double-pitched roof forms in his designs. Eventually named for Mansart, the mansard roof form (it is not clear when or why the spelling of the name changed) became the character-defining feature of the Second Empire style. Mansard roofs can be straight, convex, or concave (bell shaped), flared, or more rarely, form an S-curve. The predominant covering for mansard roofs was diamond or hexagonal shaped multi-colored slate shingles.



The Osage Mission Infirmary (St. Paul, Neosho County) was constructed in 1872 and is a simple vernacular interpretation of the Second Empire style. The classically inspired porch was added in 1912.

Many of the other character-defining features of Second Empire style are shared with another contemporaneous style, the Italianate (1840-1880). Often, the only detail that distinguishes an Italianate building from Second Empire is the roof (Italianate structures commonly had flat or very low-pitched hipped roofs). Characteristics common on both styles are: bracketed cornices, bracketed or pedimented window hoods, tall paired windows, bay windows, decorative iron cresting, and towers or cupolas. Building types can be single-family detached houses, row or town houses (typically urban), or grand public structures.

Although Second Empire appears in the United States as early as the 1850s, it does not appear to have reached Kansas until the 1860s. Known construction dates are as early as 1865 (construction of Parmenter Hall in Baldwin City began in 1865 but was not completed until around 1882) and are as late as 1886 (Cimarron Hotel in Cimarron) although earlier or later examples may exist. It is a comparatively rare style but it can be found scattered throughout Kansas with known examples as far west as Gray County.

At the Historical Society we are always looking to further our understanding of the spread of architectural styles throughout the state. We have created the Historic Resources Inventory Database in order to capture this and other valuable information about architectural resources and would like to encourage all Kansans to contribute. If you know of a Second Empire style building we would like to hear from you. Please send an email with a photo to our survey coordinator, Caitlin Meives, cmeives@kshs.org.



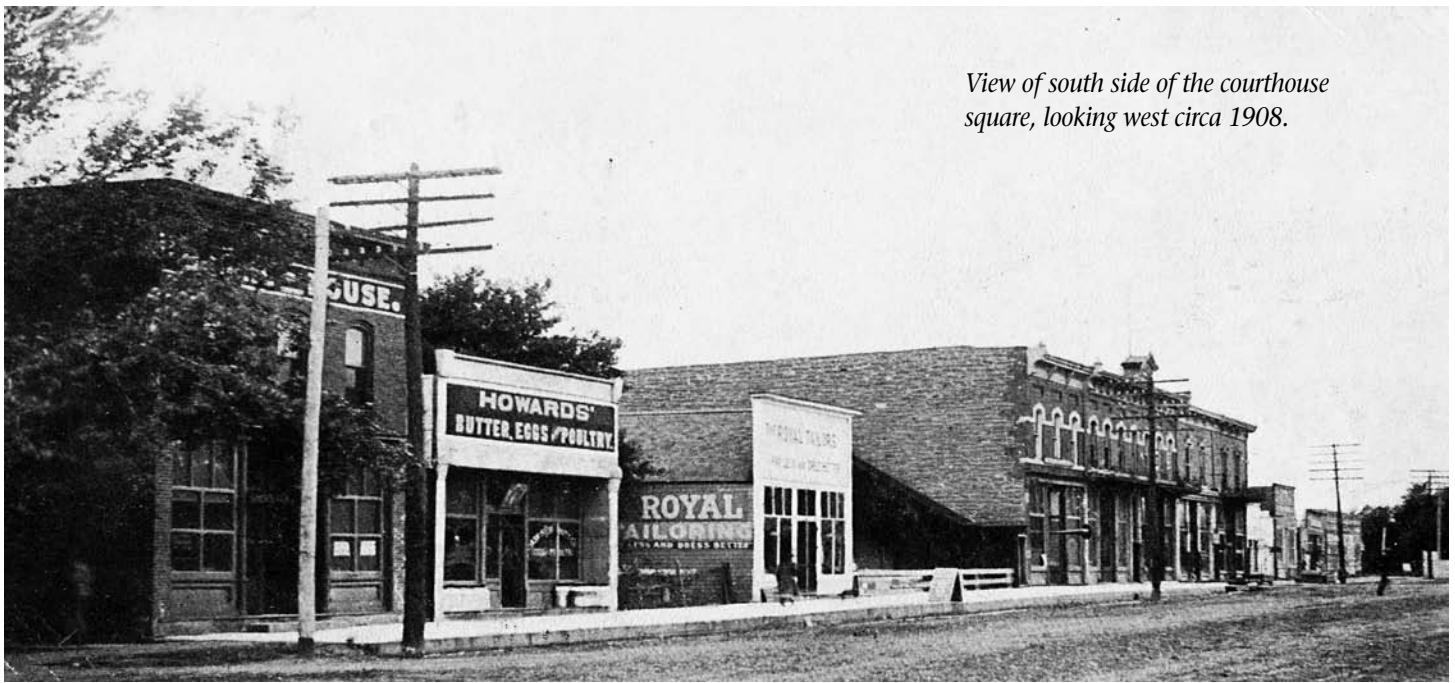
The Fred Harvey House in Leavenworth (1875) features stone construction and a bell-shaped mansard roof. Stone was not commonly used to construct Second Empire buildings, however it is a locally prevalent vernacular tradition in Kansas.



The Chase County Courthouse (Cottonwood Falls) is a high-style public building with elaborately adorned windows, cornice, roofline, and a central clock tower.



The deep mansard roof makes the second story of the Balie Waggener House in Atchison look more like an attic. Mansard roofs were practical in this regard as their boxy structure allowed for useable interior space.



View of south side of the courthouse square, looking west circa 1908.

Belleville: A Most Beautiful Town

by Sarah Arbuthnut
Freelance writer

“No town in the state more beautiful” boasted an 1899 local newspaper article of Belleville, gateway to the homestead country of the central Great Plains, where visitors today can still enjoy brick streets, friendly faces, and Rockwellian hometown charm.

Situated in Republic County, part of the northern tier of Kansas counties along the Nebraska border, another writer observed in 1890 that “the streets are wide and straight and well shaded. . . The business blocks are substantially built, of brick and native stone, the frame structures of pioneer days having disappeared . . . With its abundant supply of water, with its superior railroad facilities, and situated as it is in the center of a rich agricultural and stock-growing region, Belleville offers the best advantage to persons seeking desirable business locations and places for residence of any city in Kansas.” This sense of civic pride is a sentiment that continues to this day.

Belleville became an official town on September 25, 1869, with the organization of the Belleville Townsite Company. Located in Republic County (so named for the Republican River, which runs through the county), Belleville was named the county seat in 1870. That same year the Belleville Townsite Company contracted the digging of a well to supply water for the new town and the building of a “town

house” to serve a variety of community needs. This log town house had a door at one end, a window at the other, and stood on the open prairie at what is today the northeast corner of 19th and M Streets. Belleville’s first post office, first store, first church, and first school all found homes simultaneously in the town house.

By 1872 the town had grown enough to warrant the building of its first courthouse in the center of the public square. This modest, two-story wood-frame building was erected on the north side of the square and was quickly surrounded by a number of new businesses. The Belleville Townsite Company dissolved in 1874 and four years later Belleville was incorporated as a city of the third class. A decade later, in 1888, Belleville had become a city of the second class with more than 2,000 residents.

The entire state of Kansas boomed economically in the 1880s and Belleville was no exception. County agriculture flourished and was celebrated every fall with fairs or festivals, a tradition continued to this day. The first railroad



1902 M Street opened as the People's National Bank in 1910.

connection arrived in Belleville on November 29, 1884, in the form of a Union Pacific Railroad passenger train. Though the Union Pacific was the first, the Rock Island Railroad would prove to be the most influential in the town's history, as Belleville became an important division point for two Rock Island branches running stock and grain to markets in Kansas City, Omaha, and Chicago.

In response to repeated fires, more substantial brick and stone replaced wood frames in the construction of downtown businesses. Approximately 23 of the buildings in the historic preservation survey area were constructed prior to 1900, though all have storefronts altered in the 20th century. Additionally, another 12 buildings were constructed in the period 1900 to 1919, with 33 more built between 1920 and 1945.

The commercial architecture of the Belleville downtown survey area is representative of Kansas architecture during the periods of construction. Buildings constructed in the late 19th century represent the Late Victorian Italianate and Romanesque styles. Most of the buildings constructed in the early 20th century are examples of the Commercial style, but there are a few examples of the Colonial Revival and Classical Revival styles, as well. Additionally, downtown Belleville boasts two striking exceptions to traditional Kansas architecture: the Blair Theater, with an elaborate Spanish Revival façade, is situated on the south side of the square. And the Republic County Courthouse, a rare example of Art Deco style applied to a Kansas courthouse, sits in the center of the square and central business district.

The Blair Theater, "one of the finest in northern Kansas

and southern Nebraska," was built by Sam H. and Katie Blair in 1928. The Blairs bought an existing moving picture theater on the south side of the square in 1920 and operated it until the lease expired in 1928. They then purchased and gutted three commercial buildings on the south side of the square and constructed a "modern" movie theater, ornamented in an elaborate Spanish style and wired for "talkies." The new Blair Theater opened December 24, 1928, with the first talking picture premiering four months later.

After the passage of many years and several owners, the Blair Theater closed its doors in the mid-1990s. In 2000, however, the Blair Center for the Arts, a non-profit organization dedicated to revitalizing and renovating the theater, began its work and to date has spent more than \$275,000 refurbishing this landmark theater. The Blair Theater reopened in late 2008, boasting one of the state's few 3-D screens and presenting first-run films, as well as hosting a variety of cultural and educational events.

The original Republic County Courthouse burned and was rebuilt in 1885. That structure succumbed to fire in 1938. The Public Works Administration (PWA), a New Deal economic recovery program of the Great Depression, quickly approved a grant for construction of a replacement building. Mann & Company, an architectural firm in Hutchinson, designed the structure. The new Republic County Courthouse was dedicated in late 1939. It was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2002 for its association with the PWA in Kansas and for its rare use of Art Deco style applied to a county courthouse.

Extensive development of the Interstate highway system after 1956 weakened the economic position of railroads and



Republic County Courthouse, 1815 M Street.

accelerated a population movement of Kansans from farms to cities. In the post World War II period, a major change in the Belleville commercial district has been the relocation of services, automobile services, and implement dealers to commercial corridors approximately seven blocks west along Interstate 81 and 10 blocks south along U.S. 36. Nevertheless, downtown Belleville retains a good number of specialty stores, banks, and offices. Downtown Belleville is still an active business district anchored by public services including the city hall, post office, library, and Republic

County Courthouse. Situated at the intersection of two major highways and within easy driving distance of dozens of communities in both Kansas and Nebraska, Belleville is in a prime position to attract visitors and new residents to this most beautiful of towns.

This article is based on the Belleville Downtown Historic Preservation Survey prepared by preservation consultant Dale Nimz for the Belleville Main Street program.

Belleville Downtown Survey

by Caitlin Meives

Survey Coordinator, Kansas Historical Society

In addition to documenting exceptional architecture such as the Blair Theater and the Republic County Courthouse, the Belleville Downtown Survey documented 91 other buildings along M Street, 17th Street, and in the blocks immediately surrounding the courthouse square. While historic resource surveys often lead to the nomination of a historic district to the National Register of Historic Places, a nomination does not necessarily have to follow a survey. In this case, based on the findings from the survey, the Kansas SHPO determined that downtown Belleville may have the potential for a National Register historic district but that the district could be strengthened by making some relatively simple changes to historic building façades.

Belleville's example highlights the many other advantages to conducting surveys. The historical research performed by preservation consultant Dale E. Nimz provided the community with a context for the development of its commercial core and the evolution of its building stock. Belleville's Main Street program and the larger community can use this information for marketing and promotional purposes, perhaps increasing heritage tourism efforts as well as local pride. Examples of such uses could include interpretive signage or walking tours. In addition, this information can serve as the basis for a National Register nomination if the city and property owners wish to pursue a historic district in the future.

The city of Belleville can also use the survey information, historic context, and preservation recommendations provided by Nimz and the SHPO to incorporate preservation activities into its planning efforts or even as a basis for a citywide preservation plan.

Perhaps most importantly, the survey information and



Blair Theater, 1312 19th Street.

images gathered on each property are now available and readily accessible to the public on the SHPO's online survey database, the Kansas Historic Resources Inventory (KHRI) at kshs.org/khri. Visitors to the site can access the 93 Belleville survey records, which include historical and architectural information, color digital images, and site plans. Property owners who make changes to their buildings can update the survey records to reflect those changes if they register with KHRI. They can also upload new digital photos or add new information to the survey form.

As a result of the historic resources survey, the city of Belleville, its residents, and the Belleville Main Street program now have an inventory of the core downtown buildings, a historic context statement, and a public education tool. Armed with knowledge of its past and preservation recommendations, the Belleville community can now look toward the future while still promoting and preserving its past.

2010 Historic Preservation Grant Deadlines

The federal Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) provides assistance to state and tribal preservation offices each year. These funds are awarded to assist in expanding and accelerating those organizations' historic preservation activities. Federal regulations require that a portion of these funds be passed through to local communities and preservation organizations to assist with their preservation activities.

To meet our federal requirements, each year applications are accepted as part of a competitive grant round. Grants are used to fund historic property surveys, National Register nominations, preservation plans, design-review guidelines, and educational activities such as brochures, conferences and workshops.

The Kansas State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) awards HPF grants each year to organizations such as historical societies, universities, regional planning commissions, non-profit corporations, and city and county governments to help support local historic preservation activities. Federal regulations require that a minimum of 10 percent of this annual allocation be passed through to Certified Local Governments (CLGs). These are local governments that have been certified by the National Park Service (NPS) because they have demonstrated a commitment to preservation. More information on the CLG program can be found at kshs.org/resource/CLGs/clghome.htm. Often there are sufficient funds to support preservation activities proposed by non-CLG entities as well, but CLGs receive priority consideration.

An HPF grant must result in a completed, tangible product and all activities must pertain to the preservation programs outlined in the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. The grant monies may be used to fund up to 60 percent of project costs. The other 40 percent (recipient match) must be furnished by the project sponsor and may be provided through cash or in-kind services and materials.

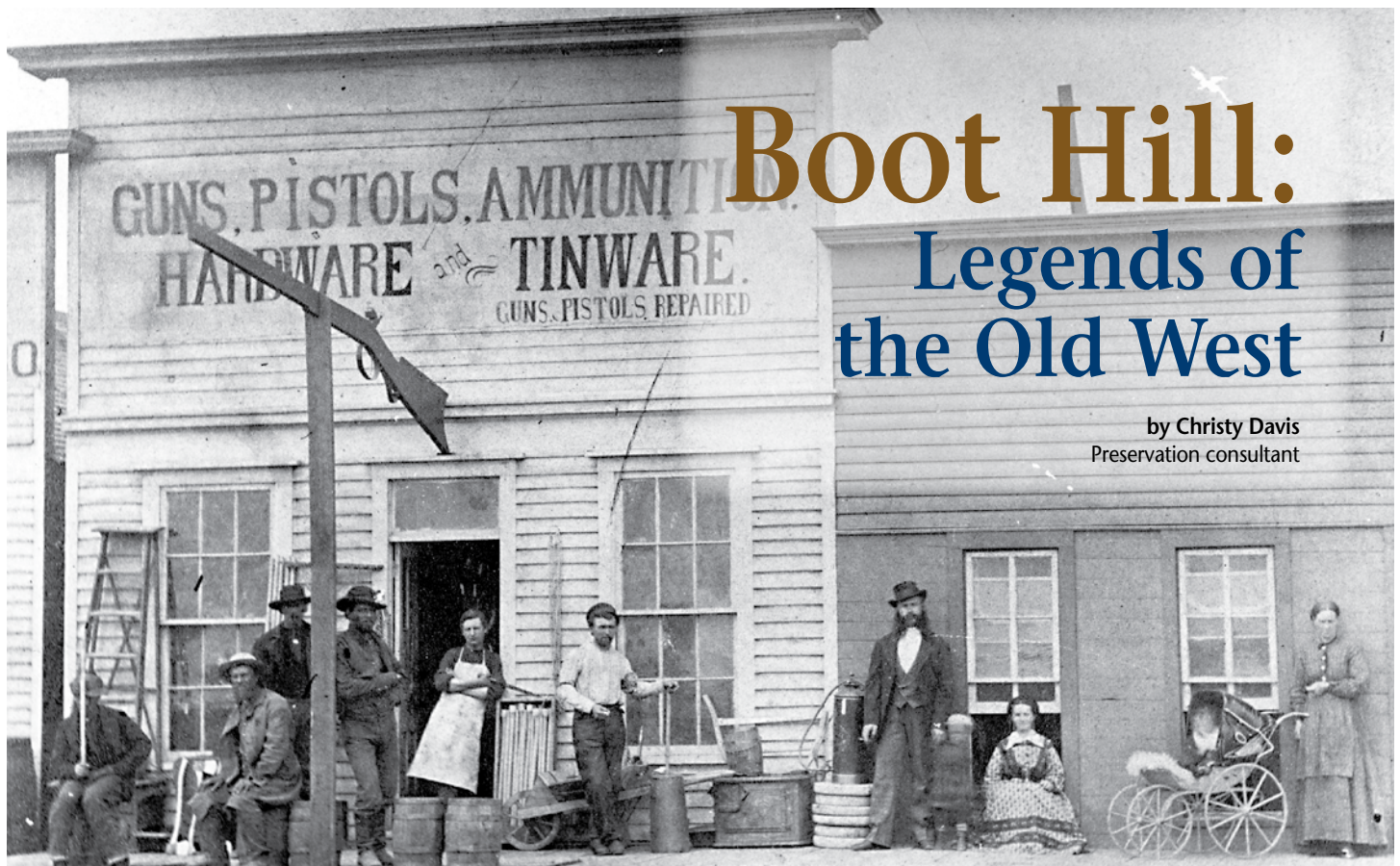
Applications for the 2010 HPF grant round are posted online at kshs.org/resource/hpfinfo.htm in a writable PDF form. Additional information and guidance on this program is also available at that web address.

The SHPO staff will gladly review and comment upon preliminary HPF grant applications. The deadline for preliminary grant applications is February 1, 2010. Final applications must be postmarked no later than March 15, 2010, or delivered in person to the SHPO by 4:30 p.m. on that date.

For more information or to request the application in a different format, contact Katrina Ringler, grants manager, at 785-272-8681, ext. 215; kringler@kshs.org; or visit kshs.org/resource/hpfinfo.htm.



The Peabody Downtown Historic District in Marion County.



Boot Hill: Legends of the Old West

by Christy Davis
Preservation consultant

Dodge City's Front Street in the 1870s.

In the late 1920s rumors swirled that Dodge City's notorious Boot Hill was to be leveled. Although county coroner J. W. Straughn had moved the casualties of the city's early shootouts to the Prairie Grove Cemetery in 1879, the cemetery's original site captivated the imaginations of Dodge Citians, most of whom by then had no ties to the town's wooly past. A number of dynamics—the deaths of many early pioneers, the introduction of cowboys like Will Rogers into American popular culture, and the new auto tourism business—converged to create the tourist attraction known as Boot Hill.

“Give most children the choice
of visiting Valley Forge or Dodge
City ... Dodge City wins. It is more
glamorous in their imagination
than Valley Forge.”

— Alfred M. Landon

The rumors were spurred when the Dodge City schools abandoned the Third Ward School, one of two schools that had occupied the site since 1880. If someone did not take action, a developer could level the historic burial place of the city's rowdiest characters. In July 1925 the city council considered a resolution to purchase the property. The council passed Ordinance 614, which called for a special election to purchase Boot Hill. City fathers played a key role in saving the landmark, asserting the place's significance as a potential tourist attraction. In a joint letter to the *Dodge City Globe* editor, 14 boosters urged voters' support noting, "Boot Hill ... could be converted into one of the show places of the city ... the historical value of the tract should be capitalized." The measure carried in early April 1927 and the city issued \$12,000 in bonds to buy the property.

As soon as the city bought Boot Hill, advocates from Dodge City and beyond began pushing for a museum there. A. B. McDonald, a feature writer for the *Kansas City Star*, urged the city “to start a movement to establish some sort of museum into which all the relics of the early days might be brought and preserved.” In 1928 Dodge City hosted the state Republican convention. On a lark, the hosts set up fake grave markers on Boot Hill. Although the phony cemetery would come to dominate the front lawn of the new municipal building, the headstones were so popular that the Junior Chamber of Commerce left them there. Early plans for the municipal building included a museum addition, but there was no room for it in the budget. For decades, pioneers Dr. O. H. Simpson and Heinie Schmidt settled for the headstones and plaster statues to commemorate the city’s cowtown days.

By the time the new municipal building was completed, the stock market had crashed—and some feared Boot Hill was destined for the same fate. The city fathers assuaged their actions by touting the project’s work-relief prospects. On January 31, 1931, a front-page headline read, “More than 100 Men Get Jobs on Boot Hill.” The small print noted that the men would use shovels to level Boot Hill “to the height of the retaining wall around it” for 30 cents per hour and 20 cents per load. When boosters were not convinced of the project’s merit, city commissioners hedged that they “believ[ed] the slope and terrace, when it [was] landscaped [would] be a slightly background for whatever historical setting is used on the hill...”

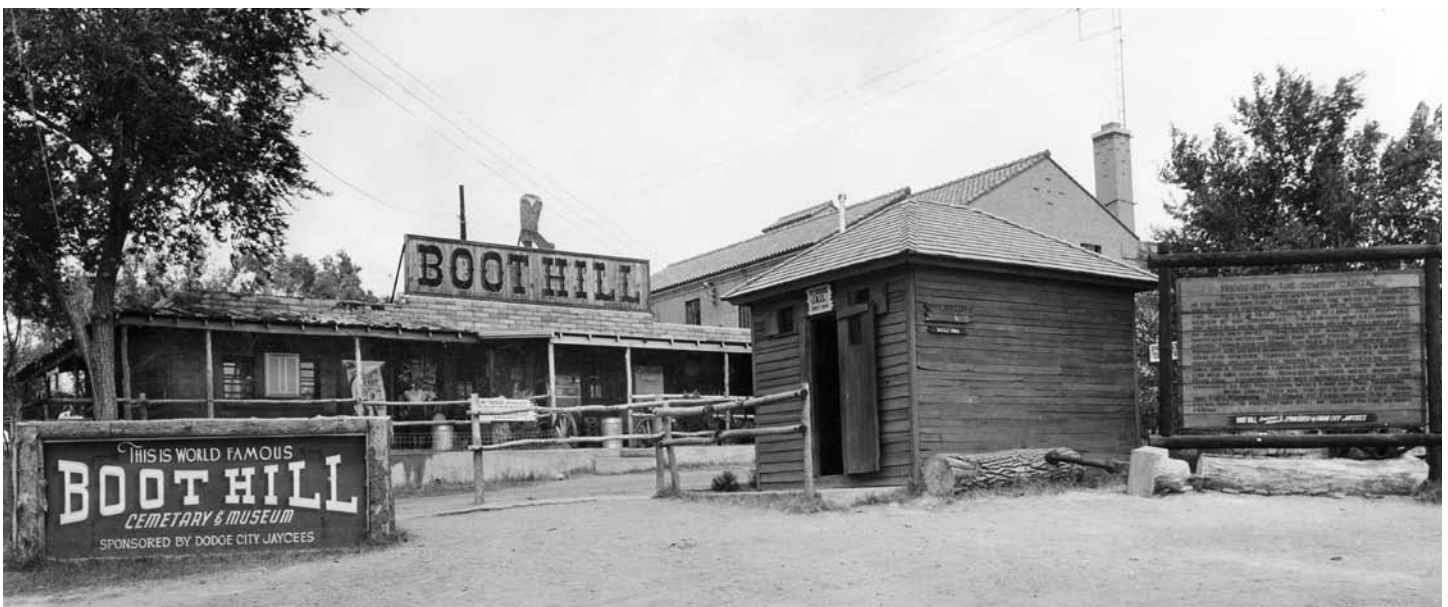
Meanwhile, ideas for proposed “historical settings” came pouring in. Among them was a plan to take the newly

flattened landscape and create a 3-dimensional replica “western landscape,” a “Historic Shrine” that would look more like a southwest plateau than anything found in Dodge City. The promoters were further emboldened when an estimated 200 gawkers and tourists visited historic Boot Hill on one September Sunday in 1935. By this time the visitors likely included not only auto tourists, but also some of the throngs of citizens fleeing the plains for greener pastures in California.

The hemorrhage was stemmed in part by New Deal programs, like the museum extension service, which announced plans in 1937 to employ 60 area citizens. The museum service likely spurred efforts among area volunteers to start a Boot Hill museum. But perhaps the driving force was the 1939 world premiere of the movie *Dodge City*, which firmly placed the town within the popular culture lexicon. In November 1940 the Junior Chamber of Commerce was successful in convincing the city commission to issue bonds to construct a museum on Boot Hill.

Plans for a Boot Hill museum were delayed as the nation turned its resources and attention to the war effort. The fascination with the West continued during the war, as Hollywood cranked out nearly 200 westerns. As soon as the war ended, the effort to building a Boot Hill museum resumed. In April 1946 the mayor outlined his proposal for the leveled landscape: “The plan,” noted the *Globe*, “is to build a commercially profitable ‘movie set’ of Front Street in Dodge City.”

In 1947 the city finally granted the Junior Chamber of Commerce permission to “construct and operate a historical



The Fort Dodge jail was moved to Boot Hill in 1953. The Beeson Museum, visible in the background, was constructed in 1947. The Boot Hill Museum purchased the Beeson collection in 1964.

structure and concession on boot hill." Merritt Beeson, son of pioneer and cowboy bandleader Chalk Beeson, broke the sod for the new building, which was sited west of the 1930 municipal building. It had a simple glazed-tile design built to house the Beeson collection of artifacts. Over time the building took on a more stereotypical outpost appearance with the addition of logs.

It had taken more than 20 years, but the Boot Hill museum was finally off the ground. The museum's growth was slow at first; 43,000 visited in 1949. But the Junior Chamber of Commerce remained committed to capitalizing on the city's past. In 1953 Dodge City men dressed as bandits, "stole" the Fort Dodge jail under the cloak of darkness, and relocated it to Boot Hill. In 1955 Dodge City was in the running to house the National Cowboy Hall of Fame. Elaborate plans for a cowboy shrine were abandoned when Oklahoma City, home of the ill-fated cowboy humorist Will Rogers, was named. Though disappointed, Dodge Citians did not lose hope.

For years the legend of Dodge City had provided fodder for Hollywood. Soon, Hollywood would return the favor. In 1955 CBS aired its first episode of *Gunsmoke*, a half-hour television program based upon a radio program of the same name. Each week American families tuned into the show, held in suspense over whether the fictitious marshal Matt Dillon and saloon proprietor Miss Kitty would ever marry (they never did) or get caught up in a gun fight. Before Dodge Citians had heard of *Gunsmoke*, (it did not air in Dodge City for its first few seasons) the show's devoted fans had heard of Dodge City. By 1958 *Gunsmoke* was television's number one ranked show with an estimated 60 million viewers and the local post office was receiving mail addressed to Matt Dillon and Miss Kitty. Overnight, Dodge City became a household name.

The town cashed in. In 1957 the city announced plans to construct a replica of Dodge City's Front Street. City leaders had first proposed the idea of a "movie set" version of Front Street more than a decade earlier. Instead of a loose interpretation of Front Street, as originally proposed, the replica would be an accurate reproduction. The design was guided by local architect Gene Gurtner, who used historic documents and photographs to ensure the replica's authenticity. Many of Dodge City's original false-front business buildings had been lost in a series of devastating fires in the 1880s. By 1890 rows of two-story brick buildings lined Front Street.

Because the original location was occupied by permanent Victorian-era buildings, the \$80,000 Front Street replica



Amanda Blake, who played "Miss Kitty Russell" in the Gunsmoke television series, at Boot Hill in 1958.

would be located west of the heart of downtown, on the south side of the leveled Boot Hill. The replica opened with great fanfare in July 1958, just in time for the height of the tourist season. The city renamed Chestnut Street (U.S. 50) Wyatt Earp Boulevard. Walnut Street was renamed Gunsmoke. (It is the only street known to have been named after a television series.)

In 1960, just two years after the replica opened, the city began plans for an expansion. In 1963 the *Globe* announced that the project would triple the size of the replica. Oklahoma City might have been named home to the National Cowboy Hall of Fame—but Dodge City would not settle for less than "Cowboy Capital of the World." After construction began in 1964, the *Globe* provided details:

The new addition will contain six store fronts with a total of 105 feet. It will complete the restoration of the first major block of the original Front Street. The construction is the first step in a proposed \$250,000 expansion project that was initiated when the city exercised its option to purchase 48,250 square feet of land to be developed by Boot Hill, Inc., and Cowboy Capital of the World, Inc.

The addition would be built over a concrete basement, constructed to curate collections acquired from the Beeson Museum in 1964. These items represented the personal collections of pioneer bison-hunter, walking bank, peace



Current view of the Front Street replica.

officer, and Long Branch Saloon owner Chalk Beeson. As he collected his debts over the years, Beeson had acquired a great deal of artifacts associated with Dodge City's Wild West days. The artifacts had been stored in the Chalk Beeson Theater and, later, in the original (1947) museum on Boot Hill. The addition was completed in time for the Longhorn Association of America to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the cattle drives by herding 150 Texas longhorns in front of the Front Street replica. Soon after the cattle drive, in 1969, the museum added the Hardesty House (1879) to the site.

As long as *Gunsmoke* remained on the air, the city saw a return on its investment. Visitation peaked at more than 400,000. When CBS suspended the show in 1967, the community panicked. Both the Dodge City commission and the Kansas Legislature passed resolutions to urge CBS to put the show back on the air. Although the impact of these actions is not clear, Hollywood legend has it that CBS executive William Paley's wife was outraged when *Gunsmoke* was cancelled. The network cancelled *Gilligan's Island* to put *Gunsmoke* back on the air. The community, which admitted that *Gunsmoke* had "certainly made [tourism] a profitable enterprise," had dodged a bullet.

But the longest-running series in television history could not remain on the air forever. In the words of the *Globe*, *Gunsmoke* "bit the dust" in 1975. The series had lasted twice as long as Dodge's cowtown days. Perhaps the lightning strike that destroyed Boot Hill's hanging tree in 1974 was an omen. Speculation about Dodge City's future in tourism abounded. The *Topeka Daily Capital* wondered "With *Gunsmoke* off National TV Will the Ghost of Dodge Linger on Boot Hill?"

The museum tried to spend and promote its way out of the predicament. Early projects were reconstructions based upon historic documentation. Later projects followed the "building zoo" model, which had swept the nation. In 1977 the museum moved in the Sitka Santa Fe Depot (1930) from Ashland and the Haviland School (1915) from Bucklin. Ironically, the wood-framed depot was more than 30 years younger than the extant historic Dodge City depot (1897), which by then stood derelict. It came to accompany a 1930 steam locomotive that was moved to the museum in 1974. Other projects included replacing the hanging tree with a new one from Horse Thief Canyon "where the previous tree was obtained." In 1982 the museum reconstructed the Great Western Hotel, which was south of the tracks until it was razed in 1942.

Despite continued investment in the museum, annual visitation plunged 25 percent, from 400,000 to 300,000 in the years immediately following the cancellation of *Gunsmoke*. As visitation declined, the museum instituted an admission fee—charging \$1 beginning in 1978. Visitation continued to decline during the 1980s and 1990s and today hovers at about 60,000. In 1996 the convention and visitors' bureau constructed a new visitor center on the southeast corner of the Boot Hill parcel. In 2000 an Applebee's Restaurant was constructed north of the visitor center.

The city's Wild West history still drives its tourism marketing efforts. The community holds an annual western celebration each summer complete with parades, rodeo, dances, barbecue, and a fiesta built around western themes. The city's new casino and resort, expected to open by the end of the year, built its theme around the history of Boot Hill.

Boot Hill: The National Register Eligibility Conundrum

When the Historic Sites Board of Review voted to approve the National Register nomination for the Dodge City Downtown Historic District at the May 9, 2009, meeting, it amended the proposed historic district nomination to exclude the properties west of Third Street, namely Boot Hill, because of concerns that the 1950s to present-era Boot Hill is a re-creation of the original Front Street buildings and did not share a common history with the more traditional historic downtown buildings.

by Patrick Zollner

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Kansas Historical Society

Upon closer examination, an individual nomination for Boot Hill poses several interesting questions under the National Park Service criteria for nominating properties to the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register Bulletin, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (formerly known also as Bulletin #15) outlines the criteria for nomination (A, B, C, and D) along with Criteria Considerations for properties normally not considered eligible for listing: religious properties, moved properties, birthplaces and graves, cemeteries, reconstructed properties, commemorative properties, and properties achieving significance within the past 50 years.

At first glance Boot Hill may be evaluated under three of the Criteria Considerations: reconstructed properties, moved properties, and commemorative properties. Under Criteria Consideration E, a reconstructed property is eligible when it is accurately executed in a suitable environment and presented in a dignified manner as part of a restoration

master plan and when no other building or structure with the same associations has survived. All three requirements must be met.

It appears the original 1957 design and the 1964 addition were reasonably accurate reproductions of the original Front Street buildings based on historic photographs and documents. The first problem arises with the NPS definition of “suitable environment”:

1) the physical context provided by the historic district and 2) any interpretive scheme. This means that the reconstructed property must be located at the same site as the original. It must also be situated in its original grouping of buildings, structures, and objects (as many as are extant), and that grouping must retain integrity. In addition, the reconstruction must not be misrepresented as an authentic historic property.



Obviously the Front Street reproduction at Boot Hill is not located on the original site. Furthermore, the original grouping of buildings was later compromised by the “building zoo” approach with the various moved buildings and the Great Western Hotel reconstruction.

To address the question of moved properties, the NPS offers Criteria Consideration B: a property removed from its original or historically significant location can be eligible if it is significant primarily for architectural value or it is the surviving property most importantly associated with a historic person or event. The 1879 Hardesty House (relocated in 1969), the 1915 Haviland School and 1930 Sitka Santa Fe Depot (both relocated in 1977), and the 1930 steam locomotive (relocated in 1974) all appear to have the potential to be individually listed for their architectural or engineering significance. However, Criteria Consideration B also makes special note for artificial groupings (also affectionately known as “building zoos”):

One of the basic purposes of the National Register is to encourage the preservation of historic properties as living parts of their communities. In keeping with this purpose, it is not usual to list artificial groupings of buildings that have been created for purposes of interpretation, protection, or maintenance. Moving buildings to such a grouping destroys the integrity of location and setting, and can create a false sense of historic development.

According to the NPS, artificial groupings can be eligible if the grouping is more than 50 years old and has achieved significance since the time of assemblage. In this case, the relocations have occurred within the past 50 years.

Finally, there is Criteria Consideration F for commemorative properties: a property primarily commemorative in intent can be eligible if design, age, tradition, or symbolic value has invested it with its own historical significance.

Commemorative properties are designed or constructed after the occurrence of an important historic event or after the life of an important person. They are not directly associated with the event or with the person’s productive life, but serve as evidence of a later generation’s assessment of the past. Their significance comes from their value as cultural expressions at the date of their creation. Therefore, a commemorative property generally must be more than 50 years old and must possess significance based on its own value, not on the value of the event or person being memorialized.

Although Boot Hill is an amalgamation of the original two-phased Front Street reconstruction (1957 and 1964) with later relocated buildings (and a reconstructed hotel), it seems that the ensemble is best classified as a commemorative property. With its origins intertwined with the popular culture phenomenon created by the television series *Guns, Smoke, and Boats*, Boot Hill provides a unique physical reminder of both that generation’s and our ongoing interpretation of the past. Under this criteria consideration; however, there are still integrity issues since most of the ensemble is less than 50 years old or was relocated into an artificial grouping.

In the final analysis, any individual National Register nomination for Boot Hill would be problematic. Ironically, the best chance for listing Boot Hill is for it to be included as part of a larger district, as with the original Dodge City Downtown Historic District nomination, since the NPS bulletin states these criteria considerations only need to apply to individual properties and that components of eligible districts do not have to meet the special requirements unless they make up the majority of the district. Otherwise, Boot Hill could perhaps be considered for nomination to the Register of Historic Kansas Places, the state register, which utilizes the same criteria for evaluation as the National Register, but with a lower threshold for integrity issues.





Save the date!

2010 KANSAS Preservation Conference

PRESERVATION AT THE Newton, KS CROSSROADS OF AMERICA

*Preliminary
Schedule
at a Glance*

Wednesday JUNE 2, 2010

Morning	Registration Preservation Program Workshops
Afternoon	Lunch on Your Own Historic Bridge Workshop Great Tours Workshop Historic Property Development Workshop
Evening	Progressive Opening Reception Dinner on Your Own

Thursday JUNE 3, 2010

Morning	Registration Welcome Economic Impact of Historic Preservation Saving Deteriorated Residential Properties Deon Wolfenbarger, <i>African-American Properties in Wichita</i>
Afternoon	Lunch On Your Own Keith Sprunger, <i>Mennonite Architecture Walking Tour</i> Ken Culp, <i>Harnessing Volunteer Power</i>
Evening	KPA Reception/Auction

Friday JUNE 4, 2010

Morning	Registration Peter Harkness, <i>The Comeback of the City</i> D. Brooke Smith, <i>The Christman Building</i>
Afternoon	Lunch Birthplace of Kansas Archeology John Speweik, <i>Historic Masonry Workshop</i>
Evening	Reception/Banquet/Keynote Charles Phoenix, <i>God Bless Americana</i>

Saturday JUNE 5, 2010

Morning	Registration Rural Heritage Tour Homeowners Workshop
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Registration will open April 15.

Register online at <http://www.kshs.org/resource/preservationconf.htm> or request a registration form by calling Billi Jo Wilson at the Newton Chamber of Commerce, 316-283-2560. Registration forms will also be included in the Winter 2010 issue of *Kansas Preservation*.

Inventorying Manhattan's Rich Archeological Record

In 1855 the town of Manhattan was established in the northern Flint Hills along the Kansas River upstream from the mouth of the Big Blue. Early Euro-American settlers found this area well suited to agriculture and commerce. They also realized quickly that they were not the first people to make this place their home. By 1880 various individuals, many associated with Kansas State Agricultural College (later Kansas State University), explored the valleys and uplands for archeological evidence of earlier inhabitants of the region. At that time they did not understand the age of the remains they found. Today we know they span at least 13,500 years and provide clues to the ways of living of many generations of people before us.

by Lauren W. Ritterbush
Archeologist

Despite the deep history of humans in this region and early recognition of archeological remains in and around the present city of Manhattan, this record of the past has often been overlooked. Many archeological sites, even those known to Manhattan residents for more than 100 years, have been impacted or destroyed. With development and growth of the city, a concern for the fragile and irreplaceable sources of information about the past has arisen. The Manhattan Archaeological Survey was designed to address this concern.

A Historic Preservation Fund grant was awarded by the Kansas Historical Society to the city of Manhattan in 2008 to complete Phase I and II archeological inventory and survey of the Manhattan Urban Area, which encompasses the city limits and immediate surroundings. The city subcontracted with the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work at Kansas State University (KSU) to complete this project.

Phase I involved review of historic and archeological documents and databases for

information about previous archeological studies pertaining to the project area. There was also an inventory of archeological sites that had been formally reported to the Kansas Historical Society over many years. The archeological richness of the Manhattan area was revealed through this inventory. As of December 2008, 98 archeological sites or places of past human activity had been recorded in the project area. These include sites ranging in age from approximately 6,000 years ago to less than 100 years old. The majority is prehistoric, or relate to native inhabitants who left no written records of their lifeways and date more than 200 years old. A few reflect the more recent history of Manhattan, such as the Goodnow House (a state historic site), where archeological and historical research has been conducted.

The relatively large number of previously recorded sites is small compared to the many archeological sites that once existed in this region. Those sites listed in the Kansas Historical Society archeological inventory are only those that have been



Bluemont mound near Manhattan



Stone fence formed of upright stone blocks and slabs.

formally recorded by avocational or professional archeologists or members of the general public. Many known sites have not been reported, and the remains of many thousands of years of human activities already have been destroyed or buried.

Phase II of the Manhattan Archeological Survey added to the inventory of archeological sites in the project area. A crew of archeologists and KSU anthropology students walked over 436 acres of land within the project area searching for archeological remains. Many of these tracts were selected because they had good archeological potential as indicated by the presence of previously reported sites or by their geographic settings. Areas deemed suitable for future development were also surveyed whenever possible. Time, funding, ground cover, and landowner access limited the number of acres that were professionally inspected. Nonetheless, 22 previously unreported archeological sites were identified and many previously reported sites were revisited.

A variety of sites in diverse settings exist in and around Manhattan. A number are visible as scatters of prehistoric artifacts in the valley bottoms. Cultivation has disturbed the context of these artifacts, yet they provide clues to past human use of the area. Many represent the permanent homes of hunter-gatherer-gardeners who lived in this region 1,000 to 600 years ago. Others were campsites of more mobile hunters and gatherers as many as 6,000 years ago. The valleys of the Kansas and Blue rivers, as well as of Wildcat Creek and other tributary streams offered many useful resources including water, shelter, wood for fires and building materials, clay, aquatic and terrestrial animals, and

numerous useful wild plants. The neighboring uplands also provided necessary resources. Notable among these is quality stone for making cutting, scraping, drilling, and other tools. Chert (or flint) was readily available along the slopes of many of the Flint Hills uplands. Remains of initial flintknapping activities are often found near outcrops of quality stone with workshops for shaping tools nearby. Between 2,000 to 1,000 years ago, family members often honored the dead with burial on prominent bluff tops overlooking the valleys. The deceased were sometimes cremated or otherwise prepared before being buried with bone and shell beads, pendants, pottery, and stone and bone tools. Burial sites were commonly covered or marked with piles of local stone to form small cairns or “mounds.” Later peoples sometimes added to these interments. In at least one instance, a separate ossuary was used in the valley. This 1,000- to 600-year-old communal burial ground probably served as a focal point for a community of gardeners who lived in scattered farmsteads along the valley.

Not only have prehistoric sites of early native peoples been recorded in the Manhattan area, but also those dating to the historic period. The transition from the prehistoric to the historic period is marked by a Kansa village that once existed in Pottawatomie County. Unlike earlier native sites in this region, a written description of this large earthlodge village from 1819 is available. This provides some information about Kansa culture between about 1794 and 1825. Through study of oral traditions and ancestral Kansa archeological sites, we know that the Kansa do not trace their ancestry to the earlier peoples of the Manhattan area.



Stone-lined well.

Nonetheless, their late 18th and early 19th century presence marks the transition from the prehistoric to the historic period, as well as dramatic change from American Indian use of this area to that dominated by Euro-American migrants.

A number of historic sites associated with the settlement and expansion of Euro-American and African American settlers exist in Manhattan and the surrounding area. Several of these had been previously recorded as archeological sites while others were identified during this project. The focus was not on sites with complete standing historic structures, rather on more subtle evidence of activities over the past 155 years. Among the historic sites recorded were scatters of artifacts from long-gone farmsteads or early residences, wells, a stone-lined dugout, foundations of a barn, cistern, root cellar, other buildings, and stone fences. Although perhaps not as visually impressive as a standing barn, house, courthouse, or commercial building, these remnants, their context, and associations provide valuable insights into the lives of our more recent ancestors that are not often described in written documents.

The Manhattan Archeological Survey only sampled the archeological record of Manhattan. However, this project confirmed the richness of past evidence and extensive time depth of human use of this area. Another less positive finding is the devastating effect of growth and development on the irreplaceable archeological record. Of the 98 archeological sites known prior to initiation of this project, at least 36 (and likely many more) have been destroyed. The majority of the burial “mounds” once located on the bluff tops overlooking the valleys was dismantled in the late 19th century through looting and undocumented “excavation.” Today the Kansas Unmarked Burial Sites Preservation Act (see *Kansas Preservation*, November/December 2001) prohibits disturbing sacred places such as this. Many valley bottom sites have been severely impacted by cultivation, which destroys the all-important context (or precise setting, location, and associations of the artifacts and built features originally left behind). Many artifacts have been collected over the past 150 years by landowners, hobbyists, and curio seekers, yet when the exact setting of those remains is not documented or shared with archeologists, very little new knowledge about the earlier inhabitants of this region is gained. Likewise, residential and commercial development, in certain instances, has removed all traces of the numerous camps, farmsteads, workshops, and burials that once existed in this area. Unfortunately, these relics of the many generations of people before us are lost forever, never to be replaced.



Two Scallorn arrow points, an end scraper, and portion of a chipped stone knife made from heated chert are prehistoric artifacts collected during the survey.

Despite these irreparable losses, some archeological remnants of the past still exist in and around Manhattan and potentially hold significant information. Much needs to be done to preserve this information before it is lost forever. This is the civic responsibility of the public, as well as archeologists trained to interpret these remains. It is up to individuals who make up the community of Manhattan and its surroundings to work together to preserve, protect, share, and learn about and from the rich archeological record of this area. Systematic survey with exact documentation is needed with the assistance of local people knowledgeable about the land and the clues it holds. Information about local archeological finds is invaluable to professional archeologists who work to interpret and synthesize the prehistory and history of this region. Studies of these remains provide knowledge of the region’s heritage over thousands of years. Importantly, this information also is key to planning our present and future communities. Much remains to be shared between the public, archeologists, and planners. The Manhattan Archeological Survey is a starting point for learning more about our irreplaceable past and for planning Manhattan’s future.

Lauren W. Ritterbush is associate professor of archaeology in the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work at Kansas State University. Her expertise lies in prehistoric human use of the plains with special interest in native migrations. In addition to leading the Manhattan Archaeological Survey, Dr. Ritterbush teaches archeology, world prehistory, critical thinking, public archeology, and ethnohistory to undergraduates at K-State and serves as a facilitator for using archeology in elementary and secondary education classrooms.



Archeology Event Makes the Most of Plan B

Thirty Kansas Anthropological Association members gathered for the annual Fall Fling Saturday, September 12, 2009, at St. John's Military School in Salina. The announced plan was for two days of fieldwork at the nearby Winslow site (14SA403) at the invitation of the landowners, Stephen and Jerry Winslow.

by Virginia A. Wulfkuhle
Public Archeologist, Kansas Historical Society

Participants came ready to conduct a pedestrian survey and limited testing of the site to refine site boundaries and determine if any cultural deposits remain intact beneath the surface of the cultivated field. Originally recorded in 1968 by the late Harold Reed of Salina, the site contained features that proved to be house remains of Middle Ceramic (ca. A.D. 1000-1500) age. Unfortunately for this year's would-be surveyors, Salina had received at least four inches of rain in the previous week, and water standing in the field prevented the crew from performing the survey.

Reverting to plan B, time was spent productively in the classroom. Tim Weston, the Historical Society's SHPO archeologist, led a session on reading and interpreting USGS topographic maps, calculating Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) coordinates, plotting archeological sites, using global positioning system (GPS) units to record site locations, and completing state archeological site record

forms. Margie Reed of Salina explained the excavation at the site and artifact cataloging from 40 years earlier. Donna Roper from Manhattan, an expert on the Middle Ceramic time period, gave an introduction to the Winslow site and previous archeological investigations there. In addition, she presented general information about central plains earthlodges and ceramic traditions and led a hands-on examination of the 14SA403 artifact assemblage.

Participants had the opportunity to review the KAA teaching kits, available for public presentations, and the Historical Society's traveling trunk on archeology, *Puzzles from the Past*. For more information about reserving these resources, contact KSHS Public Archeologist Virginia Wulfkuhle at vwulfkuhle@kshs.org.

Although not the first choice for the event, plan B did provide an opportunity to practice useful archeological field skills.

Historic Sites Board of Review

The Kansas Historic Sites Board of Review is a group of 11 professionals from various fields that meets quarterly to review and recommend nominations to the National Register of Historic Places and the Register of Historic Kansas Places, and award preservation planning and rehabilitation grants. As prescribed by the Kansas Historic Preservation Act of 1977 (K.S.A. 75-2719), the board is comprised of the following members: the governor or the governor's designee, the state historic preservation officer or such officer's designee, and nine members appointed by the governor for three-year terms. At least one member must be professionally qualified in each of the following disciplines: architecture, history, prehistoric archeology, historical archeology, and architectural history.

Jay Price was appointed to the Historic Sites Board of Review by Governor Mark Parkinson in September. Price of Wichita is currently the director of the public history program at Wichita State University. He teaches courses in American cultural and social history and is also on the board of the Kansas Humanities Council. Price holds a doctoral degree in history from Arizona State University with an emphasis in public history.

Jennie Chinn, State Historic Preservation Officer
Craig Crosswhite, Ness City, chair
J. Eric Engstrom, Wichita, governor's designee, vice chair
John W. Hoopes, Lawrence
Nancy Horst, Winfield
Leo Oliva, Stockton
Billie Marie Porter, Neodesha
Daniel Sabatini, Lawrence
David H. Sachs, Manhattan
Jay Price, Wichita
Margaret Wood, Topeka

Cultural Resources Division State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and Archeology Staff

Jennie Chinn
Preservation Officer (SHPO)
785-272-8681, ext. 205
jchinn@kshs.org

Rick Anderson
National Register Historian
785-272-8681, ext. 228
randerson@kshs.org

Dorothy Booher
Office Assistant
785-272-8681, ext. 230
dbooher@kshs.org

Chris Garst
Laboratory Archeologist
785-272-8681, ext. 151
cgarst@kshs.org

Wes Gibson
Administrative Assistant
785-272-8681, ext. 235
wgibson@kshs.org

Bob Hoard
State Archeologist
785-272-8681, ext. 269
rhoard@kshs.org

Michelle Holmes
Administrative Assistant
785-272-8681, ext. 230
mholmes@kshs.org

Kristen Johnston
State Tax Credit Coordinator
785-272-8681, ext. 213
kjohnston@kshs.org

Marsha Longofono
Tax Credit Clerk
785-272-8681, ext. 233
mlongofono@kshs.org

Sarah Martin
National Register Coordinator
785-272-8681, ext. 216
smartin@kshs.org

Caitlin Meives
Survey Coordinator
785-272-8681, ext. 257
cmeives@kshs.org

Kim Norton Gant
Review and Compliance
Coordinator
785-272-8681, ext. 225
kgant@kshs.org

Katrina Ringler
Grants Manager/CLG Coordinator
785-272-8681, ext. 215
kringler@kshs.org

Kimberly Smith
Grants Reviewer
785-272-8681, ext. 227
ksmith@kshs.org

John Tomasic
Archeologist
785-272-8681, ext. 258
jtomasic@kshs.org

Cindi Vahsholtz
Grants Clerk
785-272-8681, ext. 245
cvahsholtz@kshs.org

Tricia Waggoner
Highway Archeologist
785-272-8681, ext. 267
twaggoner@kshs.org

Julie Weisgerber
Federal Tax Credit Coordinator
785-272-8681, ext. 226
jweisgerber@kshs.org

Tim Weston
SHPO Archeologist
785-272-8681, ext. 214
tweston@kshs.org

Virginia Wulfkuhle
Public Archeologist
785-272-8681, ext. 266
vwulfkuhle@kshs.org

Patrick Zollner
Division Director &
Deputy SHPO
785-272-8681, ext. 217
pzollner@kshs.org

CONTACT US



6425 SW 6th Avenue
Topeka KS 66615-1099

Happenings in Kansas

Online at kshs.org/calendar

Through December 31, 2009

George Catlin, Frontier Visionary

Exhibit at the Pawnee Indian Museum State Historic Site,
Republic

January 2-31, 2010

Pawnee Artists, Voices from the Past and Present

Exhibit at the Pawnee Indian Museum State Historic Site,
Republic

January 22-November 28, 2010

Cars: The Need for Speed

Kansas Museum of History, Topeka

January 29, 2010

Kansas Day at the Museum

Kansas Museum of History, Topeka

February 20, 2010

Historic Sites Board of Review Meeting

February 20-21, 2010

KAA Certification Seminar

Lindsborg

March 15, 2010

HPF Grant application deadline

May 8, 2010

Historic Sites Board of Review Meeting

June 2-5, 2010

Kansas Preservation Conference, Newton

New KSHS Staff



Wesley Gibson joined the Historical Society as a half-time administrative assistant for the archeology department. A veteran of four archeology training programs and a former archeological field technician, Wesley is pursuing a degree in anthropology. He is a member of

the Kansas Anthropological Association (KAA) and the Professional Archaeologists of Kansas (PAK).

Join the Preserving Kansas listserv under Historic Preservation at kshs.org.